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JAN 23 1899

Three Orations

—BY—

Jno. W. Arcander, LL. D.,

OF THE

Minneapolis Bar.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.:
DREW & CO.,
1899.



SECOND COPY,
1899.



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JNO. W. ARCTANDER, LL. D.

OF THE

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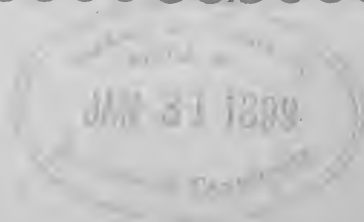
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Sincerely yours
Geo W. Fretander

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17TH OF MAY ORATION

DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF

Norway's Independence Day,

—BY—

THE NORSEMEN'S SINGING SOCIETY,

IN HARMONIA HALL, MINNEAPOLIS,

ON MAY 17TH, 1895.

“There was a time when Norway's fame was proudest tale on farthest shore. To be a Norseman was to be a hero none could conquer, and who was proof against all chains of slavery. Yea, soft and silken chains of woman's charms on him were spent in vain.

The men were Vikings free. The maidens' bosoms swelled with love and longing for a wild and war-like life.

See, this was Norway's dawn.

No serfs were there.

Free men where'er you turned, who dared to look their king in eye, and tell him earnest words, which grated on his ear.

Away from hearth and home, a free, wild Viking life, with battle and with storm, with joy and victory.

With pride and swelling hearts we see their stormy tracks marked out on roughest sea—to greenest vale of Ireland, to sunny shores of France, to gates of Rome, to City on the Straits of Bosphorus.

Where Norsemen came, there valor, strength and victory did follow in their wake, but also death to enemies.

As mountain stream of Norway's land hurls foam of spray down wildest dance of cataract, so these old heroes of a hardy race, in wildest dance of warlike deeds struck terror to the human heart, where Norway's ships were sighted.

This was our Norway's summer day, the day of life and daring Viking's deeds.

But night must come.

It came—a long and dreary night,—as only you will find in lands of midnight sun.

A winter's night, with months for hours of its dark and dreary desolation.

Storm clouds, black and blasting, swept the land.

With chains of serfdom on their wrists the men of Norway lay for years—for nearly four times hundred years—at feet of Danish kings, who ruled and ruined men and land with iron rod.

In thralldom free ideas cannot thrive. The eye grows dull, the brain innocuous, and will of man becomes a muscle merely.

And some fine day, if long enough it last—this blasting tyranny, dead is each deed-creating faculty. The spark in human heart, by heaven lent to man, goes out, as fire goes out in flow of water.

The serf becomes an animal with no desire but that of animals.

You well might think that servitude of centuries

would bend the Norseman's neck,—that life was dead and dwindled into nothingness through dreary night of Norseland's winter.

But this was not to be.

As sometimes, in the land of mid-night sun, in coldest winter night the northern lights will dazzle brighter than the light of day almost, so do we find in darkest winter night of Norseman's life, such northern lights, as rising up of Herluf Hyttetfad against the tyranny of Second Christian, the cruelest of all the cruel Danish kings, may well be called.

And as the northern lights with glorious gleam give promise of the day that once was there and once again will come, so did those rays of light and love of liberty give hope, that once again the sunlight of the freedom fair of Norway's race would throw its glowing gleam on fjord and crags.

And when it comes, how strong and sweet will be the day of wakening, as in the valleys of the far-off Northland, where yesterday in chains of snow and ice saw bound the glens and dells, today finds greenest meadows with their many-colored flowers called into life by one day's summer sun.

It came--the day of light and sunshine bright for Norway's rockbound shore.

In France the banner of most sacred liberty was lifted high.

In all of Europe's lands the murky thrones, in darkest middle ages reared and raised, were tottering and

trembling and crumbling into dust. The God-anointed kings in pantry and in attic hid, or to the densest forests fled.

The new ideas of the Nineteenth century had come to sit in judgment on people's rights against their crowned heads.

The sacred notes of hymn of liberty struck terror to kings' hearts, but harmonies, from heaven sent, took root in hearts of younger generations.

It is the youth in every age that grasps with daring hand the standard of the future hope of liberty.

One day it was, as if a stone of large dimensions had suddenly been dropped, by superhuman force, in midst of ocean.

You have observed, I know, when smallest boy a pebble throws in pond or lake:—From deepest bottom bubbles rise, and on the sheet of water soon a ring is formed, quite small at first,—then larger,—then another ring, and so it goes from ring to ring. They grow in strength and width and size, until at last the sheet entire is one vast ring of waves, that dash against the farthest shore.

It is the waking of the dormant forces of the deep, who slumbered have for centuries.

The pebble of the little boy struck home and touched their sleeping brows and woke to life and deed the dormant forces of the sea.

Thus lay in dawn of Nineteenth century the sea of human race.

The pebble was the battle cry of liberty.

It fell into the sea of human hearts, and forces, slumbering for centuries in deepest layers of humanity, were wakened up and forth were called to life and deed.

Norway's rocky shore lies far away. Is washed by polar seas.

The wave took time to reach the rock ribbed coast; but it had gained in force and strength with distance that it came. And when it washed that rocky shore, the sacred hymn of liberty sang through the glens and dells and struck against the time-worn crags, and thousand-voiced the echo screamed and woke to life and liberty a race the world had thought was dead.

In brightest summer day of May they met on Eidsvold hill, the chosen of a people's will, and planted there, with careful hand, this sprig, that now has blossomed out in full grown tree of liberty.

It stands there now, with stem so stout, with crown so green and grand, with flowers rich of bloody red, of white and blue, as tricolor, with fruits as sweet as song.

And in its shade a happy race proclaims to gazing world that liberty can thrive on rocks and crags as well as in the richest soil, when manhood stand abreast and guard the tender plant from stormy blasts of king's attack, as well as mob's assault.

Let hopes be sent by us tonight, on wings of heartfelt wish, to Norway's shores for future growth of Norsemen's liberty, for sunshine and for happiness of brightest summer day for Norway's men and Norway's land, from now till day of doom.

That Lord of Hosts may keep His hand protectingly
and strong above our Norway's rocky shores and bless to
new activity its new born liberty.

ORATION

DELIVERED MARCH 18TH, 1896, AT THE BIER OF

Jacob Fjelde, the Sculptor,

IN THE

NORWEGIAN TRINITY CHURCH, MINNEAPOLIS.

„Jeg skal faa Lov til paa Ole Bull Monumentets Arbeidskomitees Begne at lægge en Laurbærkrans, bunden med Norges Farver, paa Jacob Fjeldes Vaare.

Den er simpel, enkel og bramfri, som han var selv, den Hedengangne i levende Live.

Den er fin og zart, som var hans varme rige Kunstnersjæl.

Den er løsterig, som var hans Liv iblandt os, for den er Kunstnerkongernes Krone.

Den kom sent til ham, Kunstnerkronen, men da den kom, om den bundet med Norges Farver, som den sidste Hilsen fra hans gamle Fædreland.

Ja, Tak da, Jacob Fjelde, for Alt, hvad Du har tænkt af rige, store Kunstnertanker!

For Alt, hvad Du har bygget og formet med Dine trofaste, ærlige Kunstnerhænder!

Tak for Alt, hvad Du har lidt; for gennem Videlsernes, Savnets og Nødens lutrende Ildflammer hæved sig Din Sjæl til større Høider, til Vidderne, hvor Du saa de store Kunstnere og tolkede dem for os!

Tak, fordi Du aldrig svægede Dit Kunstnerkald!

Fordi Du aldrig skjæmmed Norges Navn i Udlændige
hedens Land!

Tak for Dit sidste store Mesterværk, for Billedet af ham,
hin anden store norske Kunstner, som bar Norges Navn til de
fjerne Ste Strande!

Tak for Dine sidste Kræfter, som Du saa trofast viede det
store Værk!

Tak, fordi, jeg og elendig, Du ikke kunde slippe Meislen,
for Dit Livs største Værk stod der fuldbragt, og Tak, fordi Dit
sidste store Arbejde er blevet os en dragende Kraft, som har samlet
os om en stor Folkesag, der bærer i sit Stjød Løftet om en
Samlingens og Eningsens Solrinding for det norske Folk i
Amerika!

Og saa Farvel, Du varme trofaste Sjæl! Farvel fra
Din Ungdoms Kjærlighed! Fra Dine faderløse Smaa! Farvel
fra Dine mange Penner! Fra denne By, som nu, omend
silde, har lært at statte Dit Værd!

Farvel fra det norske Folk i Amerika, som idag staar
sorrighfuldt ved Din Baare!

Farvel fra gamle Norge, som med Sorgens Perler i Diet
for sidste Gang sender Dig sin Hilsen!

Farvel og Guds Fred!"

THE LAST ORATION

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH.

In behalf of the Ole Bull Monument Association I beg the privilege to place on Jacob Fjelde's bier a laurel wreath wound with Norway's tricolor.

It is simple, modest and unpretentious, as he was in his lifetime.

It is fine and tender, as was his own warm, rich artist's soul.

It is full of promise, as was his life among us, for it is the crown of the kings of art. It comes late to him, too late, this artist's crown, but then it is wound in the colors of old Norway, as a last greeting from his fatherland, the land he loved so warmly till his dying day.

Thanks, then, Jacob Fjelde, for all you have thought, of rich and grand artistic thoughts.

Thanks for all that you have builded and formed with your faithfully honest artist's hands.

Thanks for all that you have suffered, for from the purifying flames of need and suffering your soul arose to greater heights, where you saw artistic visions bright and beautiful, and faithfully interpreted them to us.

Thanks because you never once were untrue to the calling of your art.

Thanks because you never disgraced the spotless escutcheon of old Norway.

Thanks for your last great masterpiece, the likeness of that other great Norse artist, who carried Norway's fame to farthest shore.

Thanks because, sick and suffering, you could not drop your chisel till this, the grandest effort of your life, was completed.

Thanks because your last great work has gathered the Norse clans here in one great National enterprise which promises us a beautiful sunrise of greater harmony and unity among your countrymen dwelling in this great land.

And now farewell, you true and faithful soul. Farewell from the love of your youth; from your little orphan children; from your many friends; from this our great city, that now at last appreciates your worth.

Farewell from the Norsemen of America who today stand mourning at your bier.

Farewell from old Norway who, with pearls of sorrow in her eyes, sends you her last greeting.

Farewell forever!

ORATION

DELIVERED IN

LORING PARK, MINNEAPOLIS,

—AT—

The Unveiling of the Ole Bull
Monument,

MAY 17TH, 1897,

TO AN AUDIENCE OF OVER 25,000 PEOPLE.

Mr. Governor, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen:

You have all heard, I know, of the Norse Vikings of old who plowed the treacherous seas and valiantly steered for foreign shores, there to win fame, fortune and fair women.

Leif Erickson, the intrepid Norseman who discovered the North American continent four hundred years before Columbus first dreamed of a land toward the setting sun, was one of them.

Even the Nineteenth Century has its brave and daring Viking. His name is Ole Bull.

Like the Vikings of old, he boldly sailed his ship to foreign ports.

He won well-deserved laurel wreaths of fame and placed them on his country's brow.

He garnered untold treasures and brought them to his native shore, there with them to rear temples in

which the cult of the National spirit of his fatherland could be for all time maintained.

He robbed sunny France of her fairest lily and brought her to Norway's mountain cathedral, there to share his throne as the uncrowned emperor in the realm of music and song.

And when all Europe, from Cape Finisterre to the Siberian frontier, lay conquered at his feet, he, like his great prototype, Leif Erickson, steered west, toward the new world, to the great republic beyond the seas.

His tour was a triumphal march from Sandy Hook to Golden Gate; from Montreal to New Orleans.

* * *

Those of a generation, now fading fast away, who have sat under the magic spell of his mighty bow can tell you the secret of his power of conquest.

It was not his thorough school, for he had none.

He often said that his master on the violin was "the mountains of Norway."

He had bent a listening ear to the mysterious songs and melodies of the weird nature of Norway.

He had gazed deeply into the hearts of this strange, melancholy race of sturdy Norsemen, dwelling in the shadows of the eternal snows. And the secrets which he thus had learned he set to music.

All those of us who had the privilege of listening to him, will readily, with vivid emotions, recall the moments when he lured from out the deepest recesses of his violin the soft, soothing, sympathetic strains of sadness, sorrow and suffering.

The notes fell from his bow like a shower of white flowers into our ears, into our hearts, into our souls.

They clogged the trickling stream of blood from open heart wounds.

They covered with the beauty of their downy softness the ugly scars of lacerated souls.

The beatitude of peace, of loving rest, of soothing harmony stilled every aching nerve.

Our hearts did beat in sympathetic time for the sorrows of others, the surest, sweetest cure for heart-aches of our own.

* * *

To us from Norway's shores, his greatness is his smallest claim for favors.

We love him most because in all the solemn hours of his greatest triumphs he hoisted high above his head our Norway's flag with that same spirit which animates the Briton to plant the Union Jack on every shore where British ships have never touched before.

When highest honors came to him he never failed to paint in warmest colors, in a language understood by every human heart, the pine-clad mountain shores of Norway, its deep and winding fjords, the wild roar of its mountain cataracts, the soft sweet ripple of its rivulets, the scented perfume of its forest pine, the duets of its nightingales, the virgin and eternal snow on thousand mountain peaks, its long and lonesome, dreary, dreamful winter nights, the summer glories of its midnight sun, the song and story of this strange race of sturdy, stubborn yeomanry, of fair and blue-eyed maid-

ens, the strife and struggles of this hardy people, its battle with the winds and waves, its battle for existence and its still more exalted battle for independence and for freedom, until all Europe, yea, until all the civilized world turned its sympathetic eyes toward the little mountain kingdom close up under the eternal snow, of which it hardly had heard mention made before.

Ole Bull was the ambassador of Norway, not only to the courts of Europe, but to the hearts of all the civilized nations, with no royal mandate forsooth, on parchment sealed and signed, but by the higher authority of the impulse of his own noble, manly heart, and by right of that all-absorbing love he bore his native land.

He left the gates of entrance to the outside world ajar for others of his race so that when, later on, the great Norse poets, Bjornson and Ibsen, had a serious and earnest message to deliver to the nations of the world they only had to follow in his beaten path and, thanks to him, at once met hearty welcome and open ears.

* * *

Norway for centuries had been a province under Denmark, when, in 1814, a few chosen spirits set it free and made an independent Nation of it.

Centuries of servitude will curb the neck and dull the thoughts of any race, however sturdy it may be.

The forces which have slumbered during the long years of dependence must be awakened to new life before a new-made Nation can successfully assert itself.

Ole Bull felt intuitively that in order for Norway to regain its old time glory it was necessary to awaken its

National spirit which had been slumbering for centuries, and he set about this work at once.

He spent a fortune which his violin had made for him, and what was more, some of the best and most vigorous years of his life in building up a Norwegian National stage, Norwegian National music, Norwegian National literature, in short, all that was National in Norway; with the constant purpose thereby to enable his native land one day to take its proud place among the independent Nations of the world.

He became the standard bearer of what was called "the young Norway," the standard bearer of all that stood for patriotism, for hope, for the promises of the future.

It has been said, and truly said, of Norway's greatest poet, Bjornstjerne Bjornson, "that to mention his name is equivalent to hoisting the Norwegian flag," but with as much truth might it well be said that whenever, during the 50's and 60's, Ole Bull's name was spoken in Norway it was in effect like hoisting Norway's flag and the Stars and Stripes of free America, side by side in sweetest unison.

* * *

Because through his great art Norway's fame went to farthest shores; because of what he has done to make Norway truly great and free and independent, we Norwegian Americans have raised him this statue. We have raised it here in America because, faithful son of Norway as he was, he learned to love the people of this great Republic.

When kings in vain did sue for favors, fellowship and friendship at his hand, he cast his lot among us, and cast it here because he loved our institutions; because he was proud of our free government; because he felt at home among a free people.

He once said:

"Next to being born in Norway, I deem it the greatest honor ever bestowed on me that I have been permitted to become an American citizen."

We have built this statue here as an object lesson to coming generations: That those make the best adopted citizens of this Republic who love their native country most.

* * *

The 17th of May was Ole Bull's great festive day.

On that day of all days did his violin sing proudly as on no other occasion, the beautiful songs of Norway's old grandeur; of its new-born liberty; of its hopes; and of its future.

In his old age he became young again on that day. His face beamed. His heart bubbled. Why should it not? It was Norway's independence day!

I feel certain that today in the sunny land where now he dwells, and where they will have given him a violin "with sunrays for strings," he is tuning that violin now preparatory to singing on it the praise of Norway's liberty day.

And if, from his lofty stand, he can see us gathered around his statue, on Norway's festival day, I am certain

that the beautiful smile, which took the world by storm, again lightens up his countenance.

Methinks I see him nod approvingly, as if he said:

"You have understood me correctly, my friends. It is in free America I wish to see my features first immortalized in the eternal bronze, and it is on Norway's liberty day I prefer all people to first gaze at them."

* * *

Through Norway's nature, as through the life of its sons and daughters, there runs a thread of sadness and of sorrow.

Even in their gladdest moments, when their joy is wildest, you will always hear, if you listen carefully enough, a suppressed sigh.

In all of Norway's National music you will always find an undertone in the minor key; sober, earnest, gruff, sometimes wild and despairing as the wail of a lost soul, sometimes like a glittering tear, but always sad and sorrowful. It forms the theme of all their melodies.

So, in the midst of this our joy, there must, forsooth, come a shadow over our glad faces.

He who created yonder masterpiece, soon to be unveiled to the public gaze, is not with us today.

It was the ambition of Jacob Fjelde's life to be permitted to create a statue of Ole Bull. He once sat under the spell of his bow, and he felt that in moulding the mighty contours of the figure of this great patriot he could give the world a truer conception of his own great

genius than ever before had been vouchsafed him.

His wish was granted.

When told that he could proceed with this statue he set about it with feverish haste.

Never have I seen in his eye such a gleam of hope, of happiness and satisfaction; but at the same time there was there a queer glance which spoke of anxious and nervous apprehension.

It was as if he had a premonition that this was to be his last great masterpiece, and that he must work on without rest while it was day, for soon the night would come "when no one can work."

When the rarest work of his genius was completed—when the last finishing touches had been tenderly made . . . He laid down to rest. . . . The rest from which no one awakens.

But his work will live, and that you all may greet the benign face and grand figure of Fjelde's hero, Ole Bull. I now, in the name of the Ole Bull Monument Association, request the young lady, to whom this honor has been granted, to let the veil which has hidden Ole Bull from our view fall, that all the world may see him and do homage to his genius.

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